

Virginia Tech
SACS Reaffirmation Compliance Review Team
March 13, 2008
GLC Room B 10:30 – 12:00 PM
Minutes

Present: Dean Richard Sorensen (Chair), Lanny Cross, Michael Dame, Wnda Dean, Karen DePauw, Jane Swan (for John Dooley), Dixon Hanna, Col. Dave Miller (for Zenobia Hikes), Eileen Hitchingham, Pat Hyer, Kim O'Rourke, Todd Ogle, Ray Plaza, Steve Culver for Ray Van Dyke, Melinda West for Dwight Shelton, Mildred Johnson (for Norrine Bailey Spencer), Tom Inzana (for Bob Walters), Kevin MacDonald

Absent: Kris Bush, Jeb Stewart, Tom Wilkinson, Grant Turnwald

Dean Sorensen opened up the meeting at 10:35am

Welcome:

Dean Sorensen welcomed everyone and thanked them for the time in attending this meeting. There was a full agenda for the meeting and no additions were made to the agenda.

Review of updated timeline (July 15th Deadline): Dean Sorensen noted that the July 15th deadline for the completion of SACS standards had been widely distributed since the last meeting. Jeb Stewart from Information Technology has already sent his narrative in for review by the Business College before it is forwarded to the SACS office. Dean Sorensen acknowledged that we realize that there are some people that may be delayed with their responses due to their standards but overall the objective is to be able to start using the verify and edit team to review narratives and start what will probably be an ongoing review of submissions. The SACS office has not received any panic communications regarding the July 15th deadline. Lanny Cross is still making visits across campus to individuals to see how they are progressing and what help they need to complete their assignments. The date of July 15th is to enable VT to get their arms around the overall process and see where the problems might lie.

Review of SACS Annual Meeting & Orientation: Lanny Cross reported that he attended the SACS Annual Meeting in December and some issues had come up. Due to the US Dept. of Education requiring more accountability from schools there will now be a mini-compliance review required of each school five years after the reaccreditation process. This means that in 2015 VT will be required to file a report of the QEP along with a mini-compliance report of 15 standards. Also, these 15 standards will be reviewed by the on-site committee during their visit regardless of the degree of compliance that the off site review committee determines. Dr. Cross reviewed the materials handed out at the meeting. An up-to-date SACS assignment spreadsheet was given out reflecting recent changes and the asterisked standards are all marked with an asterisk beside the standard number. A timeline recently published by SACS for the class of 2010 was included and this ties in to the dates VT is working on for all the major parts of the reaffirmation process. A summary sheet of the Fifth-Year report was distributed showing the relevant yearly dates and requirements. A complete table of all the "asterisked standards" showing the description and assignments of these standards was circulated. Finally, a piece from the SACS website from their

training Director, Dr. David Carter entitled “Expanded Guidelines for Developing A Case for Compliance.” This is an informative piece to help those who are writing narratives for compliance to look at about how to justify their compliance rating. Lanny also reported that he along with the Leadership Team will be traveling to Atlanta for the official kick-off of the SACS reaffirmation process and expect to bring information back to campus to help those involved with the Compliance process.

Lanny also explained the Verify & Edit process which will take place on draft submissions are received after July 15th and the early deadline to is to accommodate multiple revisions going back and forth between the Verify & Edit Team and the writers of the narratives. Basically it will operate as the team response coordinator will post a narrative in Scholar it will be picked up and assigned to the Verify & Edit committee for review and then reposted to the response coordinator. We envision any narrative having multiple revisions. The person listed for Primary Responsibility on the spreadsheet will be required to review and sign off on the final version. This editing process will begin after all the submissions are received after July 15th. Mildred Johnson asked if submissions could be reviewed earlier and Lanny said that they could be and “fairly clean narratives” along with supporting documentation should be submitted. In the case of financial reporting, the reports from the previous year should be submitted then once the current year’s reports are finalized, they will be included in the Compliance Certificate.

SACS Technology updates & Spring Workshop Schedule: Todd Ogle reported that the SACS office along with the Office of Institutional Research will be offer some workshops this April on reviewing Scholar use for anyone involved in the SACS process. The dates are WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9th & FRIDAY, APRIL 11th at 9 – 11 am AND 12-2 pm on both days. A notice will be sent out early next week for sign up (sign up with Christine Haimann at chaimann@vt.edu) and people are encouraged to attend since many have not looked at Scholar since last spring and get a refresher on how to use Scholar and document collaboration in their assignments and in particular posting documents to Scholar. IE has adopted WEAVE for their assessment documents and these are now being filled in all over campus. The Office of Academic Assessment is still giving workshops on how to use the system; they have been well attended. All college administrative offices are being asked to use WEAVE for assessment purposes as well.

Web Communications will be implementing a new CMS system for Web site input, they are currently running workshops for intended users.

Status Report on Standards: Wanda Dean of the Registrars office reported that the scanning of course syllabi was not complete and the departments still had to review items. Approx. 75% of departments are done and there are still some who have not replied to the inquiry regarding the syllabi. **Action: Lanny Cross suggested that Wanda send him an e-mail of those outstanding and he would follow up with them.**

Eileen Hitchingham, Dean of Libraries queried listing qualifications of professional library staff and what was required. The consensus was that she does not have to list everyone but rather general qualifications they look for in professional positions and to make sure that they have a process for periodically reviewing staff and their credentials. Samples have been sent over to the library to provide reference in how these standards were handled.

Col. Dave Miller, on behalf of Zenobia Hikes, V.P. of Student Affairs distributed lists to sign up for helping them to cover Student Affairs issues where they need input from various departments. People were asked to sign names if they knew of others who could help on the relevant standards.

The complaints policy with different places for reporting complaints needs to be looked at carefully since there does not seem to be a central location for student complaints but there needs to be evidence of a policy somewhere. **Action: Dixon Hanna will check with Dr. David Ford, Dean for Undergraduate Education on this item.**

Lanny Cross instituted a discussion on 3.7.1. on how do we verify international credentials? There has been an inquiry from another school which prompted us to look at our existing policies. Although all transcripts will be housed in HR right now it is up to the hiring faculty to verify any international credential. Pat Hyer distributed copies of the relevant policy from the existing faculty manual, it is broad, and does not specifically address verifying international credentials. Pat is going to do some more research on this issue and it may require drafting policy for approval that addresses this issue specifically. It was felt that the university should have some policy in place on this issue. It was agreed that the database for faculty credentials will start at the 2006 -2207 AY this will help eliminate a lot of part-faculty from earlier have moved on and cannot be traced.

Pat Hyer also asked about faculty credentials for different locations and it was agreed that NCR designates National Capital Region and that would be indicated when a search took place for particular faculty. Then the reviewers can look at credentials and courses faculty teach at that location.

Next Meeting: Within the next three months between June 9th and July 15th, after the Leadership Team has returned from their Atlanta orientation. A notice will be sent out to everyone once the date is chosen.

Dean Sorensen closed the meeting at 12:00 pm

CHRISTINE HAIMANN
March 17, 2008